

April 5, 2011

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Chief Executive Officer and  
Executive Publisher, *Science*

To: Members of the Tennessee House of Representatives  
Re: HB 368

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the world's largest general scientific society, I am writing in hopes that you will vote against HB 368. There is virtually no scientific controversy among the overwhelming majority of researchers on the core facts of global warming and evolution. Asserting that there are significant scientific controversies about the overall nature of these concepts when there are none will only confuse students, not enlighten them.

The core principles concerning both evolution and global warming have been subjected to substantial scientific scrutiny. They have been tested and retested for decades, and their scientific merits have been consistently reinforced. Assertions to the contrary are incompatible with an objective assessment of the vast body of peer-reviewed science.


The science of evolution underpins all of modern biology and is supported by tens of thousands of scientific studies in fields that include cosmology, geology, paleontology, genetics and other biological specialties. The concept of evolution informs scientific research in a broad range of fields, including both agriculture and medicine, which significantly affect our everyday lives.

Scientific observations throughout the world make it clear that climate change is occurring, and rigorous scientific research demonstrates that the greenhouse gases emitted by human activities are the primary driver. These conclusions are based on multiple independent lines of evidence. Indeed, our understanding of the greenhouse effect goes back more than a century.

HB 368 states that students should be taught to think critically, but such thinking is already inherent in the way science is taught. To truly benefit the students of Tennessee, teachers must present the best peer-reviewed research; only in this way will students gain the strong understanding of science necessary to compete for high-skill jobs in an increasingly high-tech world economy.

We encourage you to continue to support a rigorous scientific education curriculum in Tennessee schools by rejecting HB 368. Founded in 1848, AAAS has a longstanding interest and expertise in science education. We stand ready to assist you.

Sincerely



Alan Leshner, Ph.D